

RECKLESS RALPH'S

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

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SECRET SERVICE #258

by Harold C. Holmes

Part 1

That remarkable man, Francis W. Doughty did some of his finest work in writing tales for the Secret Service Weekly. Just when he assumed the task after various "hacks" had had a shot at it, I don't know because I haven't yet been able to read all the early issues. The first story that I have read that is definitely Doughty is SS 170. There may be still earlier stories by him but if so I haven't read them. His stories were sandwiched in among those of other authors for awhile, then he took over entirely. All his numbers were fine but certain ones appeal to one person more than some other one equally well written. That's what happened when I read SS 258. I think it is a dandy story and if you haven't read it in quite a while you may enjoy having it recalled to your mind.

#258 is titled; The Bradys and "Joe Jinger"; or, The Claw in the Convict Camp, dated Jan. 1, 1904. It was reprinted with original picture cover in #983 dated Nov. 23, 1917.

The picture is attractive. In left background is a heavy log stockade containing a big gate and just over stockade at extreme left you can see the corner of a house inside the enclosure. In center background a forest begins. In right background outside the stockade is a heavily built log cabin. Between this cabin and the stockade Old King Brady is riding toward you seated in a carriage drawn by two horses. From the cabin has come a young negro man, carrying a

rifle which he is just letting fall due to fright as Young King Brady in right foreground fires a revolver shot over the negro's head.

CHAPTER 1

About the Man Who Wrote "Joe Jinger."

On the morning of the 19th of Jan. at 10:22 AM to be exact, Y & OKB entered the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel and asked the clerk if he had any information on the blind call they had had from there. The clerk said the lady who made the call had told him nothing. He only knew she was a Miss Clayton, of the North Carolina Claytons. She had just arrived with her father, Col. Lionel Clayton, a Confed-



erate veteran who is a hopeless paralytic.

The Bradys were shown up to a parlor on the 3rd floor. A middle aged spinster appeared who said she was Miss Clayton and soon Col. Clayton was pushed into the room, in a wheelchair by an old negro. The Col. was of striking appearance large and imposing in stature, with a fierce mustache. Yet the man was to all appearances, dead, except for his eyes which were large and bright and continually in motion.

Miss Clayton began her story. Their ancestral estate, "Mossbank" was in western No. Car. Even after the war her father had retained his fortune but had come to New York and speculated in Wall Street. At first he had made money. One morning as usual he had gone to the office of his broker Mr. Bartel Biggerman. Soon a phone had come to Miss Clayton. Mr. Biggerman told her, that her father had suffered a stroke in the office and had been taken to a hospital. Col Clayton never spoke again. Paralyzed Mr. Biggerman reported to Miss Clayton that the market had gone against them. That the Clayton fortune was swept away even to the estate of "Mossbank" leaving the Claytons only one small plantation to furnish them their living.

Miss Clayton's own lawyer investigated and reported no evidence of fraud. Mr. Biggerman retired from wall St. and went to No. Car. and built a huge mansion on the site of "Mossbank" and lived there like a king. Miss Clayton had accepted the situation as final, till an incident which took place about a week before our story opens. Knowing that paralysis from shock sometimes lifts for a time, Miss Clayton had always kept a paper and pencil by the bedside within reach of the helpless Man's hand. One morning she went to her father's bedside and found him as helpless as ever but during the night he had had an interval when the dread disease had relaxed its grip for a moment and he had managed to scrawl on the paper this incomplete message. "Be quick. Get detectives Bradys, New York. All fraud. If paper still exists I can prove it. Tell them to find" The disease had clamped down on him again before he could complete that last important sentence.

After reading the message OKB said now was as good a time as any to try and help the Col. to complete the unfinished sentence. So putting the paper with a pencil on the arm of the wheelchair, OKB, YKB and Miss Clayton all concentrated on willing the old Col. to complete the message. After a moment or two of intense silence the Colonel's hand began to move, and grasped the pencil he succeeded in writing the two words that completed the sentence. The words were, "Joe Jinger."

CHAPTER 2

A Very Hard Case To Get At

Miss Clayton said she had heard the name of Joe Jinger as sort of a family tradition, he having been a slave on the estate during her grandfather's time. She said her grandfather, Dr. Clayton Clayton might know about Joe Jinger. He was her grandfather's brother and if still alive would be over 90 years old. He had for years been estranged from the family and had built himself a large castle-like house on a mountain peak in the Big Smoky Mts near "Mossbank" which he called "Eagle's Nest." The Bradys with almost no information to go on resolves to ferret out the case.

CHAPTER 3

The Bradys Locate the Convict Camp

The Bradys arrive at Jarrets, N. C. Make themselves solid with the hangers-on at the Grand Southern Hotel by buying plenty of drinks. They represented themselves as being in that region on law business. Spent several days carriage riding viewing the country. One day they came in sight of a building built on a mountain crag. The driver of their team told them that that was "Eagle's Nest" the home of Dr. Clayton, who was still alive, nearly 100 years old, lived alone in the solitude with 2 or 3 negro servants. The driver told them a large convict camp was in the vicinity although he would not talk about the camp at all. One morning the Bradys hired the team and drove out alone without their usual driver. They intended to visit Dr. Clayton first thing, after which they would try to get into the convict camp.

The paralysis that afflicted Col. Clayton seemed to be gradually lifting and in the few days before the

Bradys had left for the South the old Col. several times had muttered 'convict camp' leading the Bradys to think that possibly the missing Joe Jinger was a convict.

CHAPTER 4

The Bradys Find Joe Jinger

Soon the Bradys came in sight of a convict camp far below them in the distance which they studied as well as they could at that distance. Continuing on only a short way they came to a heavy stockade which bore a sign: "Eagle's Nest. No Admittance." Not a sound was heard. OKB drove his team into the woods where it was concealed and tied the horses there. Next they explored a large wooden hut which stood outside the palisade. It was vacant. While they were in there a large auto drove up the road occupied by a chauffeur and the pompous-looking Mr. Biggerman. A gate swung open and the auto disappeared into the grounds of Eagle's Nest. When the Bradys ventured to step out of the hut after the auto had disappeared they caught sight of a young negro man riding a rawboned horse up the road. The negro said he lived in the hut and when they asked him his name, he replied: "Joe Jinger."

CHAPTER 5

The Bradys Locate the Convict Camp

But the Bradys could see at a glance that this was not the "Joe Jinger" they were after. The negro was far too young. OKB's careful questioning brought out that this darkey's father was also named Joe Jinger and that he had been a prisoner in a convict camp so long that the darkey had no remembrance of seeing his father, let alone knowing anything about him which might help out with the case. OKB finds out that Dr. Clayton Clayton has not left Eagle's Nest in 10 years and will allow only Mr. Bartel Biggerman to visit him. A couple of negro servants get the supplies and a white man, Mr. Coles is Supt. of the estate. The Bradys decide they will try to visit the convict camp. OKB goes into the woods to drive out the team. A loud call came from inside the stockade evidently thru a megaphone, saying: "Hold Them." This direction caused the negro to rush into the hut and soon reappear with a rifle which he quickly dropped when

Harry fired a revolver shot over his head. OKB appeared just then with the team and Harry jumped into the carriage and they made rapid time down the mountain. When they had reached a level space they heard the sound of an auto coming rapidly after them. They did the only thing they could do, jumped out of the carriage, hit the horses a blow with the whip sending them flying down the road and the two Bradys took refuge out of sight behind some huge rocks. Soon the auto passed. Mr. Biggerman was not in it altho it was his car. Besides the negro chauffeur, it was occupied by two negroes and a white man, all armed with rifles. OKB was surprised to recognize the white man as an ex-convict, one Dutch Dave, a counter-ter, a highly skilled engraver, once employed by the Amer. Bank Note Co. The Bradys walked on down the mountain and after they had gone some distance they came to a fork in the road. They turned down one of these roads which proved to be the right one as soon they came in sight of a gate which bore the sign "State Property. Keep Out." Again hearing an auto approaching behind them, the Bradys dodged into the bushes at the side of the road and from there watched an auto drive past and this time it held Mr. Biggerman, himself. The auto drew up at the closed gate and stopped.

CHAPTER 6

The Arrest of the Bradys

At the approach of the auto, a tall lank guard, in uniform came out of a hut and conferred with Mr. Biggerman a few minutes. The retired broker then drove off.

OKB and Harry now approach the guard and were told no one was allowed to visit the convict camp which was two or three miles distant inside the heavy barbed wire fence. However, OKB did not have as much trouble as he expected and after talking over a telephone in the hut to Colonel Tolliver, Supt. of the camp, the Bradys were given a pass and after walking about 3 miles up a fence-lined road they came to the rough buildings housing the prison offices.

An armed guard motioned for them to enter. The Bradys found themselves in an office where a military appearing individual was pacing up and down. Said he: "Are you the two men

calling themselves the Brady detectives?" OKB replied they they were. The Colonel touched a bell and 4 men armed with rifles came into the room. "Those are the fellows," said Col. Tolliver, "arrest them."

CHAPTER 7

Prisoners

The Bradys were showed into an adjoining room after having been searched and all their weapons removed. Were left to themselves for about an hour then Col. Tolliver came in accompanied by a clerk. When asked who they were the Bradys gave their true identity. Col. Tolliver said their story was very good, its only fault being that it was false from start to finish. He said he knew they were reporters for a sensational New York newspaper sent down to write a pack of lies about the Southern convict camp system. But Col. Tolliver assured them they would know all about prison camp system as they were to be inmates of this particular camp for a long time to come.

The Bradys' protests received no attention and they were forced thru the regular convict routine, hair was cropped short, they were made to dress in the regulation striped convict suits and were put in the camp among the other prisoners. There, any hope of finding Joe Jinger, if he were a prisoner in this camp was blasted when they found that down the center of the camp ran a barbed wire fence and the whites and blacks were separated in this way. The camp was not very full due to the fact that three different groups of convicts were at work on different projects in other parts of the state. Another group was to go out soon to work in the turpentine forests.

Harry and OKB were separated in the camp. Harry being assigned to a hut containing two others, Dan Duff and Pete Smith. OKB had a hut all to himself.

After about a week of captivity there came a night of drenching rain. The misery of the prisoners was intensified as the old huts leaked water till soon the earthen floors were sodden lakes of mud.

Pete Smith in a whisper warned Harry that an uprising of the convicts was to take place and warned him to be ready.

CHAPTER 8

The Uprising in the Convict Camp

OKB had been told nothing of the coming prison uprising but he sensed something unusual was in the wind from the nervous tension that had existed in the camp all day.

He resolved to talk it over with the man who was the solitary occupant of the hut next to his. It was sure death by a rifle shot if one of the guards found him outside his hut after dark but OKB felt that he must take that chance. So opening the door he crawled on his hands and knees thru the mud toward the next hut, in the pitch dark with the rain pouring down upon him. Suddenly OKB's head collided with some object with force enough to almost knock him unconscious. The object he hit was another man's head who was also doing the crawling act to try and visit OKB. Yes, it was the man from the next hut and OKB turned and they crawled side by side till they were safe inside OKB's hut.

He told OKB that between midnight and 1:00 AM a prison break was to be started with the negro convicts leading off. Downey was also a Northerner having come down from New York to work for Bartel Biggerman. He had discovered some of Biggerman's secrets and was "framed" into prison.

Suddenly in the tumult of the storm was heard a chorus of wild shouts, immediately followed by shots from the watch towers and several crashes as the fence between the whites and blacks was overthrown.

The wildest excitement prevailed. In some way the negroes had been able to secrete several rifles and with these they blazed away at the watch towers. The negroes were headed by a big black with snow white hair. He suddenly dashed in front of the crowd and shouted "We have won. The watch towers are empty. Now for Old Tolliver, boys. Kill. Kill." "Horray," shouted the convicts, white and colored alike, "Horray for Joe Jinger."

Yes, it was true, the Bradys had at last found Joe Jinger but under the strangest circumstances and it did not look as if the finding of him would ever help out much on the case.

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NEWSY NEWS

by Ralph F. Cummings

This is about the queerest summer I ever saw. We had a week of real July weather last March and winter weather ever since, and plenty of rain. Why, it rained all but 5 days in June, all the month of May, and nearly all of April, half of it, anyway. George Flaum wrote me, asking when the summer begins up this way, boy, he's got me. When summer does get here, we'll swelter in heat for 2 or 3 months. And we had some terrible thunder storms in June, worst we ever had.

S. K. (Doc.) Hunt, says he enjoys the Roundup more and more as the months go by.

Clyde Wakefield says he can't get along without it.

Frank Henry says it's a regular prize package every month.

Charlie Duprez says that the old Street & Smith Bldg., on 7th Ave., has been torn down and a gas station there now, and Frank Tousey's old place at 24 Union Square, is there but Nos. 12 to 36 is a large S. KLEIN clothing store that takes in the entire block, 98 Williams St., of S & S, is a very tall office building.

Ralph Smith says that W. D. Boyce started the old "Lone Scout," mag. with Vol. 5, as it was another mag. before that.

Eli Messier says that Buffalo Bill and Pawnee Bill shook hands with Jim Cummings in the Kansas City depot, so as told to Eli by an old gent of 81 years. Could be possible.

In the AEC Weekly Journal of the Australian Broadcasting Commission, Box 3506, G. P. O., Sydney, Australia, has two very nice articles. In April 8 there is an article "Did Frank Richards Exist?" by R. S. Evans. and in May 5th, both 1945, "Readers Say Frank Richards Did Exist," by Leon Stone. There is a picture of The Magnet in this last issue, titled "Bunter, the Artist."

Wm. W. (Beaver Bill) Giles new address is 2416 8th Ave., Rock Island Ill.

Have you seen all the new reproductions that Charlie Bragin has, Price \$1.00 each, real scarce old timers.

Thomas W. Figley writes that his father, U. G. Figley, Member No. 65, died June 5th, 1945, at the home of his daughter in Prattville, Mich., age

80 years and 6 months, and an ardent reader of the Round-Up and various other mags. & books. Mr. Figley Sr., had an article in the January issue of Roundup, last, on "Well, What Have You."

The Brotherhood sends their sympathy to Mr. T. W. Figley and relatives, God bless him, and may his soul rest in peace.

Charles H. Tucker, 120 Boylston St., Boston, Mass., has a lot of Tip Top Weeklies from 1901 up for sale.

J. Monaghan, Illinois State Historical Library, Springfield, Ill., wants copies of Ned Buntline's "Quaker Saul" and "The Mysteries and Miseries of New Orleans."

Ye editor will pay 50c for a copy of the Feature Parade section of the Worcester Sunday Telegram for Jan. 23rd, 1944. (A Worcester, Mass. paper)

Contributions given toward the Gilbert Patten Memorial so far:

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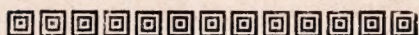
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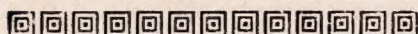


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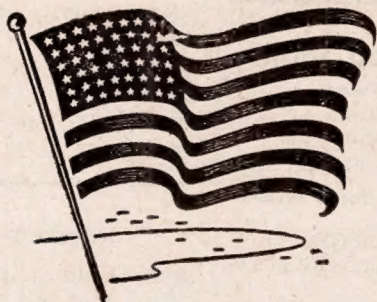
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